

DAME ALLAN'S Digest

DECEMBER 2015



A welcome from the Principal

Our latest newsletter reflects on a busy and successful half term at the Schools. The Junior School put on a number of brilliant Christmas performances and we've enjoyed many trips and opportunities to celebrate the success of our students this term. Our recent taster week in the Senior Schools saw lots of prospective students come to Dame Allan's to experience the opportunities we have on offer. We are grateful both to the students and staff who helped with this and also to those who continue to spread the Schools' good reputation to other families. We are equally grateful to everyone involved with DASPA's very successful bazaar.

The New Year will bring with it new challenges, not least the examinations in January. Good luck to students who are working hard to prepare for these, we are sure their hard work will pay off with excellent results. We hope you will enjoy the festive period, and we wish you all a peaceful and joyful Christmas and a Happy New Year. We look forward to a happy and successful 2016 together.

Not such an Ugly Duckling

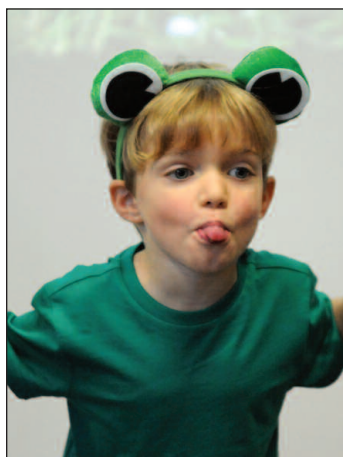


Alongside the traditional nativities performed by Nursery and Reception, children in Years 1 and 2 used their Christmas show to spread an important message this festive season. The children performed a musical version of Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale, the Ugly Duckling, including song and drama which wowed the audience alongside group and solo performances. The fairy tale has a powerful message about self-image and acceptance and reminded the audience of the importance of acceptance this Christmas time. The story is centred around a

plain looking bird, the Ugly Duckling, who is teased for the way he looks. The Ugly Duckling spends a long, cold winter alone until springtime, when he is accepted by a flock of swans. What is important in this tale is that the duckling's transformation is not magical; instead the magic is in his self-discovery and the power of being loved and accepted. Mr Andrew Edge, Head of Dame Allan's Junior School said: "The story of the Ugly Duckling is of course very well-known and a lovely musical for our young children to perform. It also has a very

important and powerful message of acceptance and of avoiding the temptation to judge a book by its cover.

This is something we take very seriously at Dame Allan's Schools. We always put our pupils' well-being first and during the course of rehearsing for this musical we have introduced 'friendship stops' in the Junior School playgrounds. These are areas where if any child feels upset or worried a playground friend will be there to speak to, play with or find a member of staff to help. These stops add to our existing Teddy Bear Bench which we have for the very young children."



Bags for Life

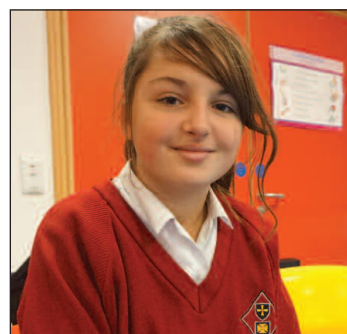
We are really pleased with the smooth transition to our new uniform. Our students look much smarter and the uniform does now represent Dame Allan's as a family of schools. This term we have been able to donate 78 bags full of our old uniform which were sent to Calais to help Syrian refugee children. Many

of these children arrived in Calais in only the clothes they were wearing, so to be able to donate so much will make a big difference to them. Many thanks too to those who contributed to our collection in aid of the West End Refugee Centre. Your donations will do much to help those in need this Christmas.

Barcelona bound

We were thrilled to welcome an international student to the Junior School this term. Anna, who is from Barcelona, joined the school at the start of term and leaves just before Christmas. Anna has spent the term with us to help improve her English language skills, staying with some of her family in England. Anna's favourite subject is drama and she says she has really enjoyed her time at Dame Allan's: "Everyone has been really welcoming to me and I will be

very sad to leave the friends I have made here, but I am looking forward to going home and seeing my little sister!"



Dances with Umbrellas

This half term six of our dance students travelled to London to take part in the Dance Umbrella Festival. They took part in a number of workshops as well as watching shows and meeting choreographers. One highlight of the weekend was an event called 'Walking Stories'. This involved students and staff wearing

headphones whilst walking around Brockwell Park. Everyone had to follow sets of instructions which were slightly different and it created a fantastic atmosphere and piece of art. There was also a special guest for the weekend – former teacher Mrs Clough joined the group to everyone's delight!



Acting up

Well done to all of our students who took part in the Shakespeare Schools Festival this term. It is the UK's largest youth drama festival, offering students across the country the opportunity to perform Shakespeare on their local professional stage. Students from the lower school drama club in Years 8 and 9 performed Twelfth Night at the Northern Stage as part of the festival. Their work was very impressive and the event was a brilliant opportunity.



Herbs & Spices

Our Year 7 students enjoyed a brilliant history workshop day at Blackfriars, complete with actors in historical dress. Students had sessions exploring herbal remedies, bread making, scullery, military matters and etiquette and learned everything from how to pluck a chicken, to how to concoct remedies for sore throats using herbs and spices, to how to use a bow and arrow. They all had a brilliant time and learned lots.



OLED celebrations

We were thrilled to celebrate so many successes at the OLED Awards Evening this term. Over 100 students from Years 9 to 13 collected awards which included Silver and Gold Duke of Edinburgh awards. Whilst working towards the many and varied awards presented at the Awards Evening, a vast amount

of volunteer time was accrued. Year 9 students clocked up 660 hours between them over the course of the year and Year 11 and 12 added a further 840 hours to this, meaning our students achieved a total of 1500 hours of volunteer time. Also presented were awards and recognition for leadership skills

whilst on the World Challenge expedition this summer. The World Challenge expedition, which takes place every two years, lasts for a month and develops important skills such as teamwork and leadership. Students gain confidence and self-esteem, are encouraged to become more globally aware and the expedition also aids their

employment prospects. The next expedition to Costa Rica in 2017 promises to be yet another brilliant experience. To find out more information on how to join please contact the school office. We are really proud of our young people for giving up their time and working so hard to achieve these awards. Well done.



Christmas snapshots

We have all been enjoying the festive period at Dame Allan's. At the Junior School we enjoyed performances of The Ugly Duckling and two Nativity plays by the Nursery and Reception. Everyone at the Junior School took part in a bauble competition and all of the designs were hung on the tree in the hall. At the Senior School we were thrilled with the lively and fun DASPA Christmas Bazaar which was complete with Santa Claus. Senior students also enjoyed carol singing and trips to the theatre.



Sport

The U18 hockey team qualified for the North semi-finals stage of the national hockey competition after playing schools from across Northumberland. They travelled down to Leeds and played some super hockey. The team finished fifth overall and represented Dame Allan's brilliantly. There has also been a lot of success on the rugby field. Our U15 and U18 teams are through to the third round of the NatWest Schools national vase competition and every team from Year 7 to



Sixth Form are competing in the later stages of the County Cup competitions. Several students have represented the county at U16 and U18 level and over the course of 2015 Dame Allan's has supplied eight county caps with several more boys involved within the wider county squads. A number of our boys are being followed by the Newcastle Falcons alongside those who are members

of the Falcons Academy. The Prague tour was also a success, with Dame Allan's winning the bowl at the Pico Cup. The boys U15 Cross Country team competed in the National Schools Cup finals in Bedford this term. The team was placed 14th nationally, which is a brilliant achievement. These successes are testament to all the hard work of both staff and students, well done!



Allanian Society

Congratulations to Allanians Sarah Glendinning and Seb Payne who have both enjoyed professional success recently. Sarah has been appointed as the new regional director for CBI in the North East. Sarah aims to promote the region and provide opportunities for regional businesses as well as

continuing her active interest in education. Seb is joining the Financial Times in January as Digital Comment Editor. This role was created for Seb who will revamp their online comment operation as well as writing for the paper and website. Very impressive appointments for both of these Allanians,

congratulations! *The Allanian Society Annual Dinner is on Saturday 12 March 2016, 6.30pm - 10pm. The cost is £25 (£20 for students in full time education). This year's theme is Modern Languages. Please email t.elandar@dameallans.co.uk for more information.*

Looking to the future...

Friday 18 December – Carol service 10am St Nicholas Cathedral. Term ends after service. Allanian Society Christmas lunch.
Saturday 19 December – Old Boys' rugby match and after match function. 11am kick off.
Tuesday 12 January – School resumes
Thursday 14 January – Life in the

Middle School for Year 9 parents, 6.30pm.
Saturday 30 & Sunday 31 January – Dance show at Dance City (Sat 7.30pm, Sun 3pm).
Wednesday 3 February – DAGS Year 11 Parents' Evening – 4pm.
Monday 8 February – DABS Year 11 Parents' Evening – 4pm.

Thursday 11 February – Choral Evensong – St James' and St Basil's Church – 5pm. End of term for Nursery to Year 5.
Friday 12 February – Founder's Day service at St Nicholas Cathedral. Term ends after service.
Thursday 3 – Saturday 5 March – School Production (Little Shop of

Horrors) 7pm – 10pm.
Tuesday 15 March – Public Speaking Competition, 7pm.
Wednesday 16 & Thursday 17 March – Years 3, 4 and 5 Combined Arts Afternoon 1.45pm.
Saturday 19 March – Junior School Open Morning 9.30-12noon



DAME ALLAN'S SCHOOLS
building the future

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DASPA

DASPA started the festive season early with the Christmas Bazaar on 21st November. A record number of visiting stallholders joined forces with DASPA's offerings of toys, books, tombola and an amazing raffle to give the parents and friends of Dame Allan's a feast of festive fun. The Junior choir created a lovely atmosphere with their Christmas carols and songs and Santa's grotto was as popular as ever. It was lovely to have some new parents get involved in their first event. Nearly £3000 was raised to support school projects. The first draw of the 50/50 club will take place in January so there is still time to purchase your tickets!

DASPA Junior has been active again this term. We had great fun organising and running the Year 3 and 4 Halloween party where children dressed up, entered the best pumpkin carving and mask competition and played party games. Preparing for Christmas, we designed and sold our annual Junior School calendar, which features all the children in their birthday month. The children designed their own Christmas cards which were then made into real cards, mugs and coasters. This helped raise money for DASPA Junior but also made great Christmas presents! Finally our Christmas bauble competition was well supported and all the baubles entered are now in pride of place on the Christmas trees. Each class winner received a chocolate advent calendar.